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RUEHNG RUEHNL RUEHRD RUEHRG RUEHRS RUEHTM RUEHVC
DE RUEHTG #1283 3452117
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 112117Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1306
INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE
RHMFIUU/DIRJIATF SOUTH IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/CDR JTF-BRAVO IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/COMSOC SOUTH IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUMIAAA/USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 001283

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: TFH01: DISARMAMENT DECREE CONTINUED AS CRIME
INCREASES

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 1268

[1](#)B. TEGUCIGALPA 1217

[1](#)C. TEGUCIGALPA 1114

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: The de facto regime will keep in effect through January 2010 the disarmament decree it enacted on November 21. Violent crime continues to rise in Honduras and its rate is the highest in Latin America. Honduran police believe trans-national gangs have taken advantage of the country's political crisis to intensify its activities. The Honduran national police has largely abandoned its fight against international crime and deployed most of its resources to Tegucigalpa in an effort to maintain order and repress the opposition. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) In a follow-up to Ref B, the Embassy has confirmed that the disarmament decree enacted by the de facto regime on November 21, days before the November 29 general election, will remain in effect through January 2010 to counter the significant rise in violent crime that has taken place in [1](#)2009. Despite the decree, however, violence has continued, contrary to de facto regime claims to the press. On December 6 alone, over 20 people were killed in incidents of violence, a figure police contacts have called "unprecedented." On December 8, gunmen on motorcycles assassinated Honduran Anti-Narcotics police director Aristides Gonzalez in a daytime attack in Tegucigalpa, only blocks away from the U.S. Embassy and the Security Ministry (Ref A). And in a separate, unrelated incident, retired Colonel Osiris O'Connor, co-owner of a large security company and cousin of de facto regime leader Micheletti was murdered in a rural area of Colon Department. Police analysts informed Embassy employee they do not believe O'Connor's murder was politically motivated, but expressed concern that it was the third killing of a private security company owner in a short time span. They also noted the passenger in O'Connor's car at the time was the father of a local 18th Street Gang leader.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Overall, violent crime continues to increase. UNDP is projecting the 2009 homicide rate will exceed 60 per 100,000 population, up from a 2008 rate of 58 per 200,000, which was the highest in Latin America and one of the highest in the world. Anti-gang police have told Embassy employees they believe the transnational gangs have taken advantage of the Honduran political crisis to wage a gang war over territorial control (Ref C). The Honduran national police

has largely abandoned its fight against international crime and deployed most of its resources to Tegucigalpa in an effort to maintain order and repress the opposition. Embassy employees have seen significant reductions in police staffing at border control posts and neighborhood police precincts, and the Director of the National Police Academy informed Embassy employee that the Academy was not conducting training of recruits during the crisis, all in order to redirect personnel to controlling demonstrations.

LLORENS